

Treasury Department,

BUREAU OF THE MINT,

Washington, D. C., April 9, 1887.

Sir:

Under the provisions of Section 3510 of the Revised Statutes, and with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, you are respectfully invited to submit designs for the obverse and reverse of such of the coins of the United States as it may in future be decided to apply them to, in case of their acceptance.

Subjoined will be found a list of current United States coins and diameters of the same, as well as the law prescribing the devices and legends.

The following is announced as the conditions under which designs will be entertained.

1. Six sets of designs are now sought for the silver and minor coins, except the three-cent piece. Acceptance of designs will be limited to that number, except on further notice.

2. They will be presented in the form of medallions in plaster, of the diameter of two and one-half inches, an obverse and reverse medallion being submitted in the case of each coin, free from lettering for denomination, such lettering to be decided only subsequent to the acceptance of the designs.

3. The relief should be in what is known as "low relief," in conformity with the universal requirement in the coinage of the present day, on account of the excessive abrasion found to follow from the employment of "high relief."

4. The designs will be submitted in sealed parcels to the undersigned, on or before July 6, 1887. Judges invited to open and pass upon the same will also be desired to recommend to the Director of the Mint to what coins of the United States accepted designs or existing patterns be applied.

5. The "date" of the coin will be omitted.

6. An award not to exceed \$500 will be made for each accepted set of designs—that is, for obverse and reverse patterns. For an obverse design accepted to the exclusion of a reverse design rejected, a sum not to exceed \$400 will be paid. For a reverse design accepted to the exclusion of an obverse design rejected will be paid a sum not to exceed \$100.

To artists who may desire to study the coins belonging to the cabinet of the Mint at Philadelphia an opportunity will be given. This collection includes several pattern pieces, the designs of which are believed to be superior to those of several of the current coins.

I shall be happy to give you any further information on the subject of this circular or to confer with you in person at Washington, or on such occasions as I may be present at the Assay Office in New York or at the U. S. Mint at Philadelphia.

Very respectfully yours,

Director of the Mint.

To

Extracts from the Revised Statutes.

SEC. 3510. The engraver shall prepare from the original dies already authorized all the working-dies required for use in the coinage of the several mints, and, when new coins or devices are authorized, shall, if required by the Director of the Mint, prepare the devices, models, moulds, and matrices, or original dies, for the same; but the Director of the Mint shall nevertheless have power, with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, to engage temporarily for this purpose the services of one or more artists, distinguished in their respective departments of art, who shall be paid for such service from the contingent appropriation for the mint at Philadelphia.

SEC. 3517. Upon the coins there shall be the following devices and legends: Upon one side there shall be an impression emblematic of liberty, with an inscription of the word "Liberty" and the year of the coinage,* and upon the reverse shall be the figure or representation of an eagle, with the inscriptions "United States of America" and "E Pluribus Unum," and a designation of the value of the coin; but on the gold dollar and three-dollar piece, the dime, five, three, and one cent piece, the figure of the eagle shall be omitted. * * * * * * * * *

<i>Weight of the coins of the United States, and their diameter and thickness.</i>			
Denominations.	Legal weight.	Diameter, (20ths of an inch.)	Thickness, (1,000ths of an inch.)
Gold:	<i>Grains.</i>		
Double eagle	516	27	77
Eagle.....	258	21	60
Half eagle	129	17	46
Three dollars.....	77. 4	16	34
Quarter eagle.....	64. 5	15	34
Dollar.....	25. 8	11	18
Silver:			
Standard dollar.....	412. 5	30	80
Half dollar.....	192. 9	24	57
Quarter dollar.....	96. 45	19	45
Dime.....	38. 58	14	32
Minor:			
Five cents.....	77. 16	16	62
Three cents.....	30	14½	34
One cent.....	48	15	43

* NOTE.—According to precedent, the phrase "Upon one side there shall be an impression emblematic of liberty" has been interpreted to provide either for a head of Liberty or for a figure of Liberty.

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Treas. Dept.
Washington, D.C.
April 9. 1887.

James. P. Kimball.
Director.

Circular inviting
new designs for U.S. Coins.



[Letter One:]

[Abstract:] Circular labeling New Designs for U.S. Coins.

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Bureau of the Mint,
Washington D.C.,
April 9, 1887

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3. The relief should be in what is known as "low relief," in conformity with the universal requirement in the coinage of the present day, on account of the excessive abrasion found to follow from the employment of "high relief."
4. The designs will be submitted in sealed parcels to the undersigned, on or before July 6, 1887. Judges invited to open and pass upon the same will also be desired to recommend to the Director of the Mint to what coins of the United States accepted designs or existing patterns be applied.
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NARA RG104, Entry 1, Box 145

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Director of the Mint.

[Letter Two:]

Extracts from the Revised Statutes.

SEC. 3150. The engraver shall prepare from the original dies already authorized all the working-dies required for use in the coinage of the several mints, and, when new coins or devices are authorized, shall, if required by the Director of the Mint, prepare the devices, models, moulds, and matrices, or original dies, for the same; but the Director of the Mint shall nevertheless have power, with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, to engage temporarily for this purpose the services of one or more artists, distinguished in their respective departments of art, who shall be paid for such service from the contingent appropriation for the mint at Philadelphia.

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Received April 9, 1887
U.S. Mint, Phila.